

Healthy Kids Act

Senate File 2425

Iowa Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319

January 2009

State of Iowa
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146

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Background:

The Healthy Kids Act was established on May 13, 2008, when Governor Chet Culver signed Senate File 2425. This amended Iowa Code Section 256.7, Code Supplement 2007, new subsection 29; Section 256.11, Subsection 6, Code Supplement 2007; and Section 273.2, Code 2007, new Subsection 7.

Rules providing guidance on the Healthy Kids Act will be included into two sections of Iowa Administrative Code – Chapter 12 and Chapter 58. The State Board of Education gave public notice on December 11, 2008, of its intent to amend these chapters. The Board will address whether or not to adopt the rules in April 2009.

Purpose:

The purpose of the Healthy Kids Act is to establish physical activity requirements for students in grades K-12 and establish nutritional content standards for food and beverage sold on or provided on school grounds during the school day. Specifically, the Healthy Kids Act does the following:

- Requires the Iowa Department of Education (Department) to establish nutritional guidelines for all foods sold on school grounds during the school day other than food provided under the federal school lunch program. This applies to school districts and accredited nonpublic schools.
- Calls for the Department to convene a nutrition advisory panel, in collaboration with the Department of Public Health, to review research on pediatric nutrition to make recommendations regarding the nutritional standards.
- Requires school districts and accredited nonpublic schools to ensure that every student in grades K-3 has 30 minutes a day of physical activity and students in grades 6-12 has 120 minutes per week of physical activity. Physical activity will be defined in Department rules and can include physical education classes, recess, interscholastic activities, school activities, and non-school activities.
- Calls for the Department to convene a working group of elementary and secondary fitness professionals and stakeholders to assist the Department in developing physical activities and models that will describe ways in which school districts may incorporate physical activities for students. These activities and models will be made available to schools in March 2009.
- Requires every student by the end of grade 12 to complete a course that leads to certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The law exempts students unable to physically manage the course.
- Requires Iowa's area education agencies (AEAs), or a consortium of two or more AEAs, to contract with a licensed dietician for the support of nutritional provisions in individual education plans and provide information to support school nutrition coordinators.

Physical Activity Working Group:

The Department convened a physical activity working group. The stakeholders who served on the working group are listed below:

John Baker	Des Moines Public Schools
Debbie Boring	Iowa Department of Education
Mark Crouch	Dowling Catholic High School
Ken Daley	Iowa Heart Association
Kevin Fangman	Iowa Department of Education
Paul Flynn	Davenport Community School District
Scott Kelley	Boone Community School District
Rip Marston	University of Northern Iowa
Bill Morain	Iowa Association of School Boards
Mary Orman	Ottumwa Community School District
Barb Schoenjahn	Starmont Community School District
Maryann Sinkler	Iowa Red Cross
Sarah Taylor	Iowa Department of Public Health
Ed Thomas	Iowa Department of Education
Valerie Unkrich	Iowa Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance
Dan Vogeler	School Administrators of Iowa
John Walling	Des Moines Public Schools
Lana Wohlers	Knoxville Community School District

The working group gave input to the Department regarding the content of the rules. They also worked through the many challenges that the legislation posed at the secondary level. The two biggest issues were block scheduling and students who have a full schedule of academic courses. They recommended allowing individual student contracts so students can meet the physical activity requirements outside of the school day.

The working group also developed implementation models for elementary, middle, and high schools. These models describe ways schools may incorporate physical activity for students into the educational program. These models are being finalized by the Department and will be released to school districts in early March 2009.

Current Status:

School districts will be required to implement the Healthy Kids Act on July 1, 2009. The requirement for graduates to complete a CPR certification course will begin with the graduating class of 2011-2012.

The rule making process is currently underway and once it is completed, districts will have further guidance for implementation. In addition, the Iowa Department of Education will provide information as needed to districts.

Recommendations for Changes in Policy or Statute:

The Department recommends that the history, intent, and value of physical education waivers (IC 256.11(5)(g)) be revisited.